

City of San Diego
Park and Recreation Board

May 19, 2011

“WE ENRICH LIVES THROUGH QUALITY PARKS AND PROGRAMS”

Meeting Held at:

Balboa Park Club, Santa Fe Room
2150 Pan American Road West
San Diego, California 92101

Mailing Address is:

City of San Diego
202 C Street, MS 37C
San Diego, California 92101

Members Present

Wilbur Smith, Chair (arrived at 3:20 p.m.)
Bruce Brown
Rick Bussell
William Diehl
Claudia Dunaway
Vicki Granowitz
Norman Greene
Roz King
David Kinney
Olivia Puentes-Reynolds
Michael Stepner

Members Absent

City Staff Present

Stacey LoMedico
Charlie Daniels
Patty Jencks
Jo-Ann Novak
Shannon Thomas
Jim Winter

CALL TO ORDER – Vice Chair, Mr. Greene, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 21, 2011 MINUTES

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Bussell /Mr. Brown

A motion was made by Mr. Bussell and seconded by Mr. Brown to approve the March 21, 2011. Vote was unanimously approved with one abstention (9-0-1).

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE – None

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – None

Consent At this time the Board may consider adoption of one or more items on the adoption agenda as “Consent” items.

COMMUNICATIONS (Limited to items not on the agenda. Each one will be limited to three minutes and is not debatable.)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Parks I Area Committee

- Mr. Bussell reported Mr. Scott Reese, Assistant Park and Recreation Director provided a presentation on proposed community gardens and commended him.

Community Parks II Area Committee

- Ms. Puentes-Reynolds expressed appreciation of the letter Mr. Smith sent to Mayor Sanders and Members of the City Council regarding the Mayor's proposed fiscal year 2012 budget.
- The Committee felt appreciated when Ms. Puentes-Reynolds read the letter from Ms. LoMedico and Deborah Barrow, Director of San Diego Library Department titled "Letter to Editor on Volunteers in City of San Diego."
- Mr. Reese provided a presentation on Community Gardens and shared the outcome of Colina del Sol tile project.
- Volunteers feel less appreciated while going through the finger printing process. Mr. Reese will check into the finger printing process and will return to next meeting.

Balboa Park Committee

- Mr. Kinney reported the Committee may vote in September on the Plaza de Panama.
- Mr. Reese provided the Committee with a presentation on proposed community gardens.
- Mr. Kinney commended Ms. LoMedico and Balboa Park staff on how great the park always looks.

Design Review Committee – No Report

Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens' Advisory Committee – No Report

Mission Bay Park Committee – No Report

Mission Trails Regional Park Citizens' Advisory Committee – No Report

Tecolote Canyon Citizens' Advisory Committee

- Mr. Bussell reported the Committee supported the letter Mr. Smith sent to the Mayor and City Council
- Mr. Bussell invited all out to the nature walk at Tecolote that takes place on the fourth Saturday of the month.
- Reported a coyote has been seen at Tecolote which has a lack of fear of humans. Fish and Game staff will be contacted regarding this issue.
- Two new Kiosks have been installed.
- Concerns with the homeless population in the canyon. Working on solutions with one being to close some trails and posting no trespassing signs so Police officers may ticket offenders (camp permits - is only enforcement).
- There will be a volunteer orientation in September.
- The Committee is seeking options to have internet service at Tecolote.
- Metropolitan Waste Water Mitigation (MWWM) has mitigation between Balboa and Mt. Acadia did a lot of non-native removal.

Torrey Pines City Park Advisory Committee – No Report

Ms. Granowitz provided an update on Balboa Park Conservancy:

- Articles of Incorporation completed.
- 501C(3) filing has been submitted.

- Bylaws have been completed and officers elected. Ms. Granowitz is secretary of the Conservancy.
- Working Sub-Committees are in place.
- Website is up: BalboaParkConservancy.org
- Seeking space in Balboa Park for future meetings.
- Working with 2015 Committee due to overlap between the two committees.
- The draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is completed and will be given to Mayor and City Attorney in near future.

CHAIRPERSONS REPORT - No Report

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Ms. LoMedico reported the Mayor's revised Fiscal Year 2012 Proposed Budget report will be heard on Monday.
 - All recreation hours received full restoration.
 - Reduction in cell phones budget for various General Fund Departments and the Department's Management team will look into how to reduce these costs.
- Teen Night Kick-off on May 6, 2011 at Encanto and City Heights.
- Ceremony of Naming of Chollas Boat Dock to Joe Bain occurred on May 14, 2011.
- The official summer kick-off will be the Friday, before Memorial Day.
- Dog Off Leash Areas (DOLA) Municipal Code changes passed after the second reading. Will take effect 30 days after Mayor signature somewhere around July 1, 2011.
- City Council heard the second reading on no dogs allowed at Children's Pool and passed. The change will be effective somewhere around July 1, 2011.
- Ms. LoMedico will send the list for eleven (11) scheduled summer movie nights to the Board.
- During non-agenda at the last meeting a citizen requested a removal procedure for dead animals at Children's Pool. The Department and Lifeguard do have a procedure in place for the removal of dead animals in shoreline and specifically for Children's Pool, which was entered into last summer. Ms. LoMedico provided this information to the citizen who requested this information.
- Ms. LoMedico has not been able to contact the citizen who requested change to the design of Memorial Community Park Pool. The Park and Recreation Board approved the design change of General Development Plan on April 15, 2010 with a (9-0) vote.
- Ms. LoMedico said if we finished meeting early, she will cancel the San Diego Regional Park Oversight Committee meeting and the agenda item will move to June, as it was time certain.

Board Members Comments/Questions

- Mr. Bussell reported the State park system had a budget deficit of \$22 million and proposes to close 70 State parks. He commended Ms. LoMedico and staff on working to keep parks opened.
- Ms. Puentes-Reynolds asked if the After-School Programs had been re-established? (Ms LoMedico stated they are still on the reduction list.)

ACTION ITEMS

101. San Diego Museum of Art Display of Calder Artwork

Mr. Daniels, Park Designer, Park and Recreation Department provided a brief report for the Park and Recreation Board to approve to extend the temporary exhibit of the Calder artwork titled “Spinal Column” through June of 2012.

Board Members Comments/Questions:

- Ms. Granowitz has issue an issue on policy. What are the criteria for granting extensions? Does this set a precedent that others will also want extensions? Will this lead to a useless ordinance? (Mr. Daniels stated that the Park and Recreation Department instituted a policy for temporary exhibits on park property. The policy was defined for exhibits as one year or less. This exhibit is falling outside that policy due to the fact that this exhibit was up prior to the policy going into effect. If a piece of art work wanted to be exhibited for 6 months or less, the exhibit would be reviewed by staff and then presented to the Balboa Park Committee as an Information Item; if it was to be for 6 months to a year, the exhibit would be reviewed by staff and go before the Balboa Park Committee as an Action Item. This exhibit has gone beyond the year and is subject to the normal review process which is to go through the Balboa Park Committee, which is also the Area Committee/Planning Committee and then the Park and Recreation Board for recommendation.)
- Ms. Granowitz commented that basically we have a policy that if you violate the policy, it will then go through the process again. The Department would not be recommending another extension, beyond the one year, and take quite seriously the Board’s advisory vote on the extension to 2012. If it were beyond 2012, the Department realizes it would have to go through a process similar to General Development changes, which would also include going through a more formal permit process in Development Services Department (DSD). Mr. Daniels stated that it would be viewed as an amendment to a General Development Plan (GDP) and Balboa Park depending on its impact and consultation with City Planning and Community Investment staff that could result in a plan amendment. It also would be reviewed by Historical Resources staff for consistence with Secretary of Internal Standards. This is an overlay process to the Commission for Arts and Cultures Department Instruction and the provisions in the Municipal Code for displays of art on public land. This is not directly in the Park and Recreation purview.)
- Mr. Kinney stated that he shares the concerns of Ms. Granowitz’, however, feels that this example/exhibit is somewhat unique in that it was installed prior to the policy was in place and that’s the challenge.

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Kinney/Mr. Stepner

A motion was made by Mr. Kinney and seconded by Mr. Stepner to approve the staff recommendation for the extension the period of installation for the Calder Artwork.

Discussion

- Ms. Puentes-Reynolds asked if the extension was for 2012 or 2011? Mr. Green responded June 2012.
- Ms. Granowitz stated she would not be voting for this.

Vote passed (8-2) Ms. Granowitz and Ms. Puentes-Reynolds opposed.

INFORMATION ITEMS

201. Guidelines on the Use of Synthetic Turf within the City's Park System for Athletic Areas

Presenter – Jim Winter, Project Officer II, Park and Recreation Department presented the report on developed guidelines for the potential use of synthetic turf in City Parks athletic areas. The Synthetic Turf Guidelines will be incorporated into the Department's Consultant Guide to Park Design and Development to provide direction to City staff and outside consultants involved in park design. Mr. Winter reviewed the guidelines with the Board.

Board Members Comments/Questions:

- Mr. Greene asked if there was any consideration given for the safety of athletics playing on the synthetic turf? (Mr. Winter stated that a number of studies have been done and have found that the incident of injuries on synthetic turf is no greater than which occur on natural turf.)
- Mr. Stepner is concerned about the use of synthetic turf with the connection to nature which the parks are all about and this is lost with synthetic turf. Also concerned with the permeability with the land and the ability for the land to breathe. On guideline number 5, with the "lock fields", although it was stated that the use of synthetic turf will make the park more usable, sounds like this is not the case. On guideline number 8, activities not allow, there will really be no way of controlling activities and we will have the maintenance problems. Guideline number 9 "Shade and drinking fountains shall be provided near the synthetic turf field", is critical because the heat that is generated off the synthetic turf makes it a very uncomfortable environment to play on in warm weather. It is also states in guideline number 9, "Where shade and/or drinking fountains cannot be provided, efforts shall be taken to encourage users to provide acceptable portable shade systems and drinking water." The Department has a responsibility, if putting in synthetic turf, to provide the health and safety measures like water and shade. Guideline 10 states that the synthetic turf will be "wash down prior to start", which again is critical. We are looking for a saving measure without weighing all the issues that have to be raised with synthetic turf.
- Mr. Brown asked if there would be any prohibition to the type of footwear that can be worn on the synthetic turf? (Mr. Winter stated that depending on the type of synthetic turf that was laid, that would have to be addressed.)
- Mr. Bussell stated that cost benefit as it was projected out over 10 or 20 years, it equaled out, because what was saved in maintenance during the course of synthetic turf in use was lost due to the big capital expense to replace at the end of a certain period of time. Why would we do this? (Ms. LoMedico stated that not everything that is done in parks is just based upon cost. Once a month or more, community groups call, e-mail, or inquiry about synthetic turf for dog off leash areas, athletic fields, and other areas. The Department has received memos from Council Members inquiring about synthetic fields. Synthetic turf is a complex issue, complex not only because of the use, but complex based upon the fact that there are potential health issues, yet we have a demand by recreational and club groups, high schools and others who literally want to have the programming of fields all the time and the Department cannot maintain the fields.
- Mr. Greene stated that we need the guidelines. Is the adoption of these guidelines going to endorse the use of synthetic turf? (Ms. LoMedico stated that the answer would be yes,

as an option.) The Language Academy came before the Board, which has an asphalt area without any shade, and now we have it changing to synthetic turf. Why not just leave the asphalt? Why bother putting in synthetic turf? (Ms. LoMedico stated that each agreement is done separately in terms of the approval process, both by Park and Recreation as well as all the other Departments that weigh in. On this issue, the Council has the final say. As a Department, we understand that as an Advisory Board, there can be frustration on certain projects.)

- Mr. Bussell asked who is going to be the group or person who is going to decide if an individual project warrants synthetic turf or natural turf? Will any of the Advisory Board have an input on this process? (Mr. Winter stated no, this is not a policy, but guidelines that will go into the Consultants Guide to help designers if a synthetic turf is proposed.) Mr. Bussell asked if that proposal would come before the Board? (Ms. LoMedico stated that this is not changing Council Policy 600-33.
- Mr. Diehl stated that as a coach he has been on synthetic turf with no problems and spectators bring shade and water to the games. If the Department is going to have synthetic turf, a turf fee should be changed to cover the cost of replacement.
- Ms. King would like to see some kind of tracking so that the Board is aware of request for synthetic turf versus natural turf. It is important to have this as an option and that it is not a mandate.
- Ms Granowitz concerned that even through the gates may be lock, people of a certain age and health will hop the fence. The only people who would be kept out are the disabled and old.
- Ms. Puentes-Reynolds concerned about the heat from the synthetic turf and lawsuits. Need to define the time cycles of the turf plus the cost of replacement. (Mr. Winter stated that cost analysis is for 20 years.) Ms. Puentes-Reynolds asked if the cost is in comparison to natural turf was equal? (Mr. Winter stated that synthetic turf was always higher. The Department will always be monitoring the manufactures of synthetic turf to see the improvements as time go on.)
- Mr. Kinney shared the concerns of the Board on a number of issues. However, is convince that the Department can resolve a number of these issues satisfactorily.

202. Park and Recreation Department Fiscal Year 2011 Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

Ms. Jencks, Supervising Management Analyst, Park and Recreation Department provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Fiscal Year 2011 customer Satisfaction Survey Results. The main purpose of the survey is to gauge the satisfaction of our customers and focuses on our park users, not on non-park users. This year's figures were slightly higher than last year. Users rated their experience with our park system as 93.7 % excellent or good, our programs at 93.1% excellent or good and facilities were rated 94.1% excellent or good. Park and Recreation staff was rated as 96.7% courteous, 97.8% helpful and 99.0% professional in appearance.

Park guests were asked if they would support an increase in park user fees to maintain current service levels. Fifty-five percent of the respondents answered yes. There were 60.8% of the respondents who felt the fees they pay currently were the right amount for the quality of services received for that fee.

Overall park users found themselves to be safe in park and recreation areas with an average rating of 1.84. This was a slight change from the last survey which showed an average rating of 1.95.

Board Members Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Bussell commented on the 26% of the public who felt our programs/fees were under priced. There is 86% of the public who state that the prices are okay or too low. Perhaps it is time to raise the fees.
- Ms. Puentes-Reynolds asked what is the difference between the after school programs and the youth programs? (Ms. Jencks stated that the youth programs were those activities that were offered at the recreation center versus the more structured afterschool programs at the teen centers.) Where do the responders of the survey come from geographically? (Ms. Jencks stated that the surveys are coded by location they are collected at, and then there are demographic questions on the survey. Once the surveys are calculated, the calculations are looked at to see where we fall in the census demographics.) Did you receive equal comments from throughout San Diego City? (Ms. Jencks stated yes.)
- Mr. Brown asked if the Department had any capabilities of doing surveys online? (Ms. Jencks stated that the Park and Recreation Department does not have that system.

Mr. Green cancelled the Oversight Committee Meeting for today.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting: **Thursday, June 16, 2011, 2:00 P.M.**

**Balboa Park Club
Santa Fe Room
2150 Pan American Road West
San Diego, CA 92101**

Submitted by,

Stacey LoMedico
Park and Recreation Director